



FOUNDATION FOR FAIR CONTRACTING OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

78 Beaver Rd., Ste 2D
Wethersfield, CT 06109
www.ffcct.org

Education Committee
Public Hearing

March 15, 2023

Re: SB 1198 - *An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the School Indoor Air Quality Working Group*

Chairman McCrory, Chairman Currey, Ranking Member McCarty, Ranking Member Berthel, and members of the Education Committee,

The Foundation for Fair Contracting of Connecticut (FFC) is a non-profit organization which monitors public works construction projects covered under the State of Connecticut's Prevailing Wage Law and the Davis-Bacon Act. We accomplish this by reviewing public documents prepared and/or submitted by owners and contractors. We focus on proper payment of prevailing wage rates, proper classification of workers, licensing, and properly administered state apprenticeship standards.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of SB 1198, "*An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the School Indoor Air Quality Working Group*".

The legislature made progress in 2022 by providing funding for some remediation and establishing a working group to provide recommendations back to the legislature for 2023. However, with over 500 schools with poor HVAC systems or no air conditioning at all, more needs to be done. Additionally, without temperature and humidity standards in place, school districts will continue to defer maintenance and remediation. SB 1198 seeks to improve upon Section 370 of public act 22-118.

Firstly, the proposed legislation seeks to extend the charge of the working group until July 1, 2024. School IAQ is a complicated, important topic which affects thousands of schoolchildren and teachers. Extending the working group's timeline ensures that their final report will be comprehensive, science based, and equitable for all who their work impacts.

Senate Bill 1198 requires the Department of Administrative Services to prescribe forms and establish an online portal for the collection of Ventilation Verification reports. This is important so that the legislature can track all school districts and ensure funding for these upgrades is being dispersed equitably. The proposed legislation also seeks to extend the deadline for initial Ventilation Verification reports to January 1, 2025. The extension will ensure that all districts will have access to trained and certified technicians and design professionals to perform the work. The bill also allows for waivers for equivalent inspections performed in a different format, or for inspections already scheduled to take place after the deadline.

We would suggest that SB 1198 be modified to require that schools perform an inspection using the Environmental Protection Agency's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools program from every three years to annually, but the reporting should be kept at every 5 years to prevent unnecessary administrative burdens. In fact, the working group unanimously endorsed the legislative recommendations, including annual Tools for Schools inspections. We believe this change is crucial to the program's success.

Trade union HVAC contractors and their building trades partners are highly qualified and properly trained. The workforce is ready and able to maintain and improve indoor environmental conditions in schools across our state.

We urge you to support SB 1198 with the suggested change to the frequency of inspections and for a Joint Favorable Substitute vote.

In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, or if there is any additional information I can provide, please feel free to contact me by email to kglassman@ffcct.org or by phone at 860-667-7727.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kimberly Glassman
Director